

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 166513

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

UNCLAS STATE 166513

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, UR

SUBJECT: YURI GAGARIN INTERNATIONAL BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

1. USSR BASKETBALL FEDERATION HAS INVITED U OF MARYLAND TO PARTICIPATE IN GAGARIN BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT TO BE HELD TALLINAUGUST 12-21 AND HAS AGREED TO PAY RETURN AIR TRAVEL MOSCOW-NEW YORK FOR 16 TEAM MEMBERS AND PROVIDE FULL HOSPITALITY DURING TOURNAMENT.

2. HOWEVER, UNIVERSITY TEAM IS NOW DOWN TO 7 PLAYERS DUE TO GRADUATION AND BAN ON USE OF INCOMING FRESHMEN. MARYLAND COACH DRIESEL WISHES KNOW IF POSSIBLE TO ADD ADDITIONAL PLAYERS FROM OTHER UNIVERSITIES REPRESENTED IN ATLANTIC COAST CONFERENCE. OTHERWISE HE IS RELUCTANT TO PARTICIPATE, AS FEELS TEAM WILL BE WEAK.

3. DRIESEL NEEDS BACKGROUND HISTORY OF TOURNAMENT, SOME IDEA OF COMPETITION TO BE EXPECTED, CONFIRMATION OF SOVIET OFFER TO PAY RETURN TRAVEL TO NY AND EXPENSES ALL AMERICANS DURING TALLIN STAY.

4. REQUEST EMBASSY URGE SOVIET SPONSORS TO REPLY TO TELEGRAM, WHICH WAS SENT BY MAIN EVENT SPORTS, WASH D.C. 1511 K ST, ACTING ON BEHALF OF MARYLAND. TO FACILITATE DECISION HERE BY MARYLAND REQUEST YOU ALSO ADVISE DEPT RE

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PAGE 02 STATE 166513

SOVIET RESPONSE ASAP SINCE TEAM MUST MAKE FINAL ARRANGEMENTS.

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